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CRISIS.

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When Kings are base, when Tyrants they are grown,
May Britons hurl them headlong from the Throne.



T will I am convinced be allowed this is not a time for ceremony, the necessity of speaking in plain terms, must be obvious to every one. It shall therefore be the grand subject of this paper (however dangerous) to point out to the English nation, the *lawless power* assumed by the prince and to shew that he has commenced tyrant in the strictest sense of the word. To obey him then whilst he acts in this manner, and tramples under foot all laws, divine and human, argues not only a want of sense in the highest degree, but a want of love to our country, and a disregard for ourselves and posterity. It would eternally brand us as SLAVES and VASSALS, and we should no longer deserve the name of *free Britons*, of *Englishmen*, names which for ages have been a terror to the world. The King at his coronation, took a SOLEMN OATH to observe and cause all the laws to be kept. The ceremony of that day was scarcely over, before the sovereign broke that most sacred promise; and directions as well as encouragement was given to the ministers, to act in open violation of the laws of the land and the personal liberty of the subject; redress was sought for in vain, the King has a Scotch rebel at the head of the law, ready to support all his measures, who is defending the cause of his
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abandoned *minions*, and trampling under foot the laws of England, those laws which were purchased by the blood of our ancestors, who placed his family upon the throne of this great *empire*, extirpated the whole race of Stuarts, and preserved themselves and their posterity free. But the grand question at present is, whether we got any thing by the swap.

The authors of the CRISIS declare it would make no difference to them whether they lived under a tyrant of the house of *Stuart* or a tyrant of the house of *Brunswick*, names and families are meer sounds; and they can conceive no reason, why we should quietly submit to the chains that are now forging for us under *George the Third*: unless the nature of slavery is altered, and become desirable; the many *virtues* which the minister tell us the King is possessed of, may perhaps make it light and easy, but the people are rather inclined to think, that those virtues so much talked of, are only a *MASK* for many *crimes*, and till their *ipse dixit* will pass with mankind; let them rest assured that the English nation will always judge by the actions and inclinations of the Prince. Oppression has succeeded oppression, and the people have been deprived of their share in the legislature, they have complained, they have petitioned, they have presented remonstrances to the sovereign, and he has absolutely refused to grant them any relief or redress, notwithstanding the power is in his own hands, and he *solemnly swore* to preserve the rights of the people, he has not only done this, but he has sent slaughter and desolation through the land, and butchered his subjects, with the most savage and unrelenting cruelty. This then is tyranny in the extreme, it is despotism in the Prince; and a perseverance a few months longer may perhaps oblige the brave and much injured people, of this island as well as the Americans, to seek that redress with their own hands, which their ungrateful monarch has denied them. *James the second* was requested to call a free parliament, he refused to comply with the requests of his people. The virtue of our fathers, however, soon made his throne shake, and the crown totter on his head. He, coward and tyrant like, deserted the kingdom. The prince who now sways the British sceptre, was called upon, by the majority of the nation to dissolve the last house of commons, and to send the electors to a choice of new representatives; he insolently refused to comply with their request, as

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he has with every other just and equitable requisition from his subjects in every part of the Empire, it is the general wish of the whole kingdom, that he may take warning by former times, before it is too late and reflect upon the consequences of his conduct. The tyranny of this reign, however, does not end here, the laws upon many occasions have been suspended and dispensed with, as at the time of the revolution, to answer the vile and wicked purposes of a corrupt court; the people have been murdered in an inhuman manner, by a lawless military force, and those very murders sanctified publickly by the King's authority; the murderers pensioned and suffered to escape the punishment due to their crimes; these are the blessed effects of the boasted virtues, and mildness of a Prince of the house of Brunswick, but the brave and sensible part of the English nation call it the wicked and absolute tyranny of George the Third.

I shall now proceed to point out to the nation the steps that are necessary to be taken in order to bring the King to reason, and a *just sense of his duty* as well as the obligations he is under to the People of England.

In every state where the people enjoy liberty, resistance to all unlawful acts of government, and every kind of violence and oppression, is warranted and justified, by all the laws of God and Man, of reason and nature, or with what shadow of truth, could it be said this or any other nation is *free*.

Now both the legislative and the prince having acted contrary to their trust, the legislative by invading the property of the subject, and making themselves arbitrary disposers of the lives, liberties, and fortunes of the people; the prince by employing the force, the treasure, and offices of the kingdom, to carry on a bloody and inhuman *CIVIL WAR*, and to corrupt the *representatives*, in order to bring them over to his cruel and wicked purposes. This then is, according to Mr. *Locke*, *Grotius*, *Puffendorff* and other great writers against unlimited power,) an actual dissolution of government; the king having set up the declared abettors of his own will, for the true representatives of the people, and the law makers of the English nation: which is as great a *breach of trust*, and as perfect a declaration of a design to subvert the government, as is to be met with in history.

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The people sensible of the injury, petitioned their sovereign, without effect, they remonstrated, but to no purpose, in terms too respectful, to a man whose ingratitude could carry him beyond the bounds of humanity ; whose weakness and ambition could make him treat with contempt, the very men who were the benefactors of his family, and had raised them to the imperial dignity of this realm ; nay they were made the jest of those *slaves* and *sycophants* who surrounded him. This behaviour of the prince, is in the opinion of all thinking men, a most convincing proof, as well as a confirmation of a design to establish an arbitrary system of government.

Resistance to those measures is therefore not only necessary, but it is become the duty of every man in England to save us from a state of lasting slavery, as a nation, nay, it is become the duty of every individual, in order to preserve himself and children from *lawless violence*, from the hands of merciless *tyrants*, and *bloody monsters*. Lord Mansfield and other time serving Judges, may perhaps declare this doctrine of resistance and this paper to be the standard of rebellion ; it would not be at all surprising, but they must however, at the same time destroy the King's right and title to the throne, the constitution of England, and the plinciples upon which the last revolution is founded, and by which the house of Hanover was elevated to three crowns. If they should be able to make out that the King can do no wrong, which is the most rediculous absurdity that can be conceived in politicks, nor is punishable or blameable by our constitution, but the *ministry* ; then the people acted in a very strange and unjust manner at the revolution, in which the KING who must be INNOCENT, only suffered, and the *ministry* who must be guilty, were not only excused, but intrusted and employed. In a word, whoever attempts to establish the above maxim, or a doctrine contrary to what is here advanced, does *ipso facto* overturn the constitution, and destroy the foundation upon which it stands.

The good of the People governed, is the end of all government, and the reason and original of governors ; and upon this foundation it is that, It has been the practice of all nations, and of this in particular, that if the mal-administration of governors, have extended to *tyranny* and *oppression*, to the destruction of *right* and *justice*, overturning the constitution, and abusing the people

people, the people have thought it lawful to reaffirm the right of government, in their own hands, and to reduce their governors to reason. Now they who say it *lays a foundation for rebellion*, to tell the People they are absolved from obedience, when illegal attempts are made upon their liberties or properties, and may oppose, the unlawful violence of those who are their magistrates, and invade their rights contrary to the trust reposed in them; and that therefore this doctrine is not to be allowed, being so destructive to the peace of the world; They may *as well* say upon the same ground, and with the same reason, that honest men may not oppose robbers, or pirates, because this may occasion disorder or bloodshed. If any mischief happens in such cases, it is not to be charged upon him who defends his own rights but upon him who invades others. If the honest innocent man must quietly quit all he has for the sake of peace, to him who will lay violent heads upon it; the peace of the world would then consist only in violence and rapine, and be maintained only for the benefit of thieves and oppressors. As this would be the case should the vile, the destructive doctrine of *passive obedience and non-resistance* ever gain ground again in this Island, We will then ask this question, which is best for mankind, that the people should be always exposed to the boundless will of tyranny or that the rulers should sometimes be liable to be opposed, when they grow exorbitant in the use of their power and employ it for the destruction, not the preservation of the people.

No one can with the least shadow of reason say that mischiefs must arise from hence, as often as it shall please a busy head, or a turbulent spirit, to desire the alteration of the government. It is true, such men may stir, whenever they please, but it will be only to their own just ruin and perdition. For till the grievances of the nation are general, and the wicked designs of the rulers become visible, as they most evidently are at this moment to the whole kingdom, the people, who are more disposed to suffer, than right themselves by resistance are not apt to stir. The examples of particular injustice, or oppression of here and there an unfortunate man moves them not. But if they have a persuasion grounded upon manifest evidence, that designs are carrying on against their liberties, and the general course and tendency of things, cannot but give them strong suspitions of the evil intention of the prince, or his ministers, who is to be blamed for it? who can help it if they

they who might avoid it bring themselves in to this suspicion? are the people to be blamed, if they have the sense of rational creatures, and can think of things no otherwise, than as they find and feel them? I grant that the pride, ambition, and turbulence of private men, have sometimes caused great disorders in common-wealths, and factions have been fatal to states and kingdoms. But whether the mischief hath oftener begun in the peoples wantonness, and a desire to cast off the lawful authority of their ruler, or in the rulers insolence, and endeavours to get and exercise arbitrary power over their people; whether oppression or disobedience gave the first rise to the disorder, let impartial history determine.

Whooever uses force without right, as every one does in society, who does it without law, puts himself in a state of war with those against whom he uses it; and in that state all former ties are cancelled, and all other rights cease, and every one has a right to defend himself, and to resist the aggressor. This is so evident that *Barclay* himself, that great asserter of the power, and sacredness of kings, is forced to confess, that it is lawful for the people, in some cases, to resist their Kings: and that too in a chapter wherein he pretends to shew, that the divine law shuts up the people from all manner of rebellion. Whereby it is evident, even by his own doctrine, that, since they may in some cases resist, all resisting of Princes is not rebellion.

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